

REVIEWED BY

P. Schmefer

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RDS ☐ or XDS ☐ EXT. DATE

13 AUTH.

REASON(S)

E. DISSE EXTENSION

DECLASSIFIED

RELEASE DENIED

PA or FOI EXEMPTIONS

The State Department has said that they regard Saudi Arabia as a moderate in the region. If that is true, how do you account for their spending \$1 million a day on the PLO? In addition, do you consider the PLO a terrorist organization, and would you condemn Saudi support of that organization?

A. Saudi Arabia, in common with all of the Arab states, recognizes the PLO as the sole representative of the Palestinian people. Saudi Arabia through the years has used its influence with the Palestinians to strengthen the hand of the more moderate elements. It supports those elements within the PLO who favor political rather than a radical solution to the Palestinian problem. Saudi Arabia has explicitly condemned terrorism. The Saudis persistently have argued that the Palestinians should reject the use of international terrorism as a policy instrument and should seek their objective through political means, including negotiations.

The PLO is an umbrella organization and includes many groups. Some of those groups are terrorist organizations that openly avow responsibility for terrorist acts. The precise legal characterization of the PLO is a complex one that the new Administration has not yet had time to review. However, our fundamental policy with respect to the PLO is clearly delineated in current American policy and I foresee no change in that: "So long as the PLO does not recognize Israel's right to exist and does not accept UN Resolutions 242 and 338, the U.S. will not recognize or negotiate with the PLO."